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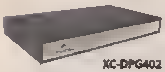

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October 2004 VOL. 2 No. 10

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Connectivity

The Nokia N-Gage 8
Motorola Wireless Adapter OC 600 with Bluetooth Wireless Technology 10
Blackberry Revised 14

Computing

Samsung Syncmaster 710T LCD Monitor 16
Brother's New Label Printer ql-550 18
The LCF P4 system 20

Entertainment

HPR707 Digital Camera 20
Dell Digital Juke Box 24
Sony Hard Disk Multiplayer HMP-A1 26

eBiz

Tepping into e-Commerce 27
Test the E-commerce Waters with eBay 28

Columns

Publisher's message 5
Letters to PerformancePC 6
Comic Strip 6
News Flash 29
Hardware Survey 30

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Struggle for Resources

By Joshua Paul

I recently stayed up late "reviewing" the latest Benq DLP projector - the PB6200 - and watched Princess Mononoke again. If you haven't seen it, in essence it is about the struggle for resources - the "natural world's" requirements for resources versus humanity's resource requirements. The struggle continues on the cover of the September 14-20th of Business in Vancouver - "Green Energy Generating Controversy" - "extreme" kayakers are fighting for the "natural world's" requirements with the Independent Power Producers, who represent humanity's resource requirements.

Perhaps you are now in the mood to consume some resources? Have your ever felt compelled to sign up for every free service on the internet - just so you can get your piece of the free pie? If so here's a list of web applications you probably already have:

Instant messaging = msn, aol/icq/aim, yahoo. Email = gmail (free, but invitation only), hotmail, yahoo, aol. Blogging = blogger, blogspot. Homepage = geocities/yahoo, aol. Contacts = plaxo, friendster. Photo album = photobucket. Searching = google, edonkey, slsk, limewire, alexa. Classifieds = craigslist.

What is missing from this list of free tools? Where is the decision making tool to help me decide what is actually worth doing? Weeks ago I joked with friends about life hosting - a special hospital like place where you can move into this medical life support cubicle (think the matrix) and you can stay online all the time.

It is scarier to realize that I am already there. Just wanting to plug-in and connect and download. Does getting my wish to make it easier to connect to all those apps make me a better decision better? Does it improve my ability to realize myself? Or does it cripple me as the rifle finger crippled the stone thrower's bicep?

Does asking the same question for hundreds of thousands of millions of years change the answer?
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Advertisers' Directory

A-Linx	p 13
Big Computer Swap Meet	p 5
Compconex	p 9
CSP Computer	p 21
Discount Mac Club	p 23
Eltech Computer	p 25
Half Price Computer Books	p 7
Liteon	p 12
Mac Station	p 5
Madisonic Enterprises Inc.	p 15
NCIX	p 2, 32
NeoCode Software	p 31
Skyway West	p 4
TigerDirect.ca	p 17
UCFV	p 19
Vastech	p 11
Xincom	p 3

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VIDEO CHATTING

Babak,

Interesting to read about your use of the Dazzle DVC80 and a camcorder for a webcam.

I picked up a Dazzle DVC80 package at my church's yard sale about a year ago. I finally upgraded my computer and tried loading up the software. The package (circa 2000-2001) came with a single CD of VideoWave 4, or rather 4SE, which makes this package one of the most wrong-headed marketing moves I have ever seen. Sell someone an USB video capture device, but the enclosed software *will not* support video capture. What?? No wonder the original owner never registered the product.

If it will work, I'm interested in using the DVC80 to capture Hi-8 analog video for editing and transfer to DVD. Given its age (probably designed for USB 1.0), I wonder whether it is up to the task. I've done some Internet searching and am waiting to hear from Roxio, who now own VideoWave. What is confusing is how much the ownership of these product lines has changed over the last 3 to 4 years. An attempt to use the DVC80 with the movie software in Windows XP resulted in a request to obtain a driver from a web address that is no longer active. One support discussion entry made reference to a non-standard, proprietary driver.

My old computer was a P2-233MHz and my new one a P4 2.8 GHz. What software do you use to run your DVC80 and what is it capable of reasonably doing?

Many thanks,
David

Good morning, David,

Thanks for sharing your experience with me.

I totally understand your confusion. Before I bought the DVC80, I had a much more expensive Dazzle product, the DVC120. The difference between the two is that the DVC120, has output as well, so after you edit your movies on your computer, you can actually use the RCA output on the DVC120 to copy the movies to your VCR.

The problem with the DVC120 is that it only recognizes it's own software (I can't remember the name right now). Neither Windows nor any other editing software that I had would recognize that this is a video capture device. They just couldn't see it.

One day at London Drugs, the sales person recommended the DVC80. He said that with this, Windows would see it as a video capture device. He said, buy it, and if it doesn't work just return it. Needless to say, I still have it.

The drivers for the products are making all the difference. When I connect the DVC80, and turn on my camera, Windows automatically sees a video capture device, and in "my computer" I see a camera icon. Once I see that icon, I can use ANY software that requires video input. MSN, YAHOO, Premiere, Movie Maker, they all work. But with the DVC120, I can only get the software that came with it to detect the device.

I should also mention that when I had Windows 98, the DVC120 was being recognized as a video capture device, and I was doing video chatting with that. However, with Windows XP it doesn't work. I guess that the people at Dazzle didn't put enough effort to upgrade the drivers for XP.

I hope I answered your question, keep me in touch with how things go.

Have a good day
Babak

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The Nokia N-Gage QD

By Babak Khonsari

The Nokia N-Gage QD (http://www.n-gage.com/en-R1/home/home.html) is an "upgrade" from the original N-Gage. The main differences between the two units are that the original N-Gage has an MP3 player, an FM radio, and to access the memory card the battery must first be removed. In the QD, Nokia got rid of the MP3 player, the radio and made it so that the memory card is inserted on the side of the unit. So the whole "upgrade" issue depends on your point of view. I personally would have preferred the unit with the MP3 player and the radio.

Look And Feel

The QD has a very unique design. On the left side is a 4-way navigation button and on the right side is the dial pad. It has a more phone like feel compared to its predecessor.

It takes some getting used to, to operate your menus with one thumb and dialing with the other.

Features

This phone offers connectivity, integration of PDA and phone as well as affordability encased in a compact unique design. The phone also displays images, sends and receives e-mail, and is MMS (multimedia messaging) capable. The battery life for gaming is around 8 hours, which is pretty decent for a gaming console.

Smart Phone??

Another interesting thing about this phone is that, it is advertised as a gamer phone, but once you do some research on it on the net, you see that it is actually more like a smart phone. The phone runs on the Symbian OS 6.0. You can install Symbian OS software (http://www.allaboutN-Gage.com/software/) into your phone and transform your gaming console into a very powerful PDA. The games card slot can also be used as a compact flash memory slot. The unit itself comes with 4 MB RAM, but with a flash memory card, you can store as much as you want. Once you download the free software from Nokia, the QD will sync contact and calendar info from your Outlook, providing your computer is equipped with Bluetooth.

The game Console

The QD has a 4096-color screen. As a gaming console, the graphics and the sounds are amazing. To find games that are available you can check out http://www.allaboutN-Gage.com. The games are way too many to name. Then there is the N-Gage Arena. This is an online gaming community for the N-Gage. The software is pre-installed on your system. You can play games online, and compete with different players from all over the world. You can also chat with the other players, add them to your chat list and so much more.

As a Phone

The QD is a dual-band GSM (850/1900) phone, not triband, so it won't work overseas; conversely, the international version won't work in North America. The speakerphone is a cool feature. It was actually powerful enough for me to carry on a conversation walking on a busy street. Phone wise it is hard to operate with one hand. You have to do your menu selections with one hand, and then do the dialing with the other. To receive and end calls, there are two tiny buttons.

Price

You can pick up a Nokia N-Gage QD from FIDO for $200 with no contract, or $150 with a two-year contract.

Final Analysis

It took a while getting used to the menus and buttons, but once that end was figured out, I found the interface very intuitive. Even though the phone is compact, it is still bulky. The phone weighs around 150g. It is definitely not a phone that you can slip in your side pocket and wander off without feeling it's presence.

PROS:

- Compact
- Unique design
- Built-in Bluetooth
- Speakerphone
- Downloadable games and programs
- Ability to sync with outlook
- Smart phone
- Bright screen

CONS:

- Not a global phone
- No mp3 player
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- Still kind of bulky

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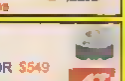

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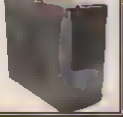

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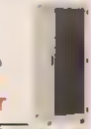

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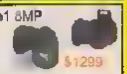

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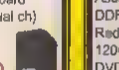

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Motorola Wireless Adapter DC600 with Bluetooth Wireless Technology

By Babak Khonsari

So you have a Motorola phone, and it's not Bluetooth (BT) enabled. You like your phone, but you want to give one of these BT accessories a try. If it was any other brand, the solution that the sales person would have for you is to change your phone to a BT phone. But if you have a Motorola phone, there may just be another option.

Motorola has come up with an attachment for phones with particular outputs that can transform the phone to BT enabled. With the DC600, you can easily transform your phone into a BT phone. The DC600 is powered by the phone's battery so no additional battery or charging apparatus is required! You can even charge your cell phone with the adaptor mounted on the phone.

The DC600 BT adaptor is a smart, cheap way of empowering your existing Motorola phone with BT technology. As with all new innovations, there are some catches, as you will see.

Compatibility

For now, only "CE" bus phones can benefit from this unit. The models are: T720, T720i, T720c, T721, T722, T722i, T725c, T730, T731, T300p, V300, V400, V60p, V60i series, V60it Color, V60x, V66i, E310, V810, V120t, V120x, V120e, V60t, V60g, V120c, V66, and V70.

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All system have a 3 year labor & 1 year parts limited warranty. Financing from 3 to 36 months (3% to 16%)
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AMD Power
AMD 2600+(Sempron)—$575
AMD XP2800+(Barton)—$605
Finance From $ 18 / Month
Asus A7V600-X AGP8X MB, 512MB DDR400 (PC3200) RAM, 80GB 7200rpm HDD, 52x32x52 CDRW + Software, Mitsumi 1.44MB Floppy Drive, ATI R9250 128M AGP8X TV-OUT, Integrated 10/100 LAN, Integrated AC97 3D Audio, 350W Tower Case w/ 2x USB, Windows 107key Keyboard, Wheel Mouse / 240W Speakers

AMD Gamer
AMD 3100+ (Sempron)—$680
AMD XP3000+(Barton)—$749
Finance From $ 24 / Month
Asus A7V600 S-ATA AGP8X, 512MB DDR400 (PC3200) RAM, 160GB (8M) 7200rpm HDD, 52x32x52 CDRW + Software, Mitsumi 1.44MB Floppy Drive, ATI 9600se 128M AGP8X TV-OUT, Integrated 10/100/1000 NIC, Integrated 6-Channel Audio, 400W Tower Case w/ 2x USB, Media Keyboard / Optical Mouse, Wooden Subwoofer + 2 Speakers

64bit Gamer
AMD 64bit 2800+ -$709
AMD 64bit 3000+—$829
Finance From $ 37 / Month
MSI K8TM ILSR IEEE1394 S-ATA, 512MB DDR400 (PC3200) RAM, 160GB (8M) 7200rpm HDD, 52x32x52 CDRW + 16x DVD Combo, Mitsumi 1.44MB Floppy Drive, ATI 9600 128M (128bit) AGP8X TV-OUT, IEEE1394 / 10/100 NIC, Integrated 6-Channel Audio, 400W Tower Case w/ 2x USB, Media Keyboard + Optical Mouse, Wooden Subwoofer + 2 Speakers

64bit Premium
AMD 64bit 3200+—$1226
AMD 64bit 3400+—$1325
Finance From $ 41 / Month
Asus K8V-SE-DX S-ATA IEEE1394, 1 GB DDR400 (512x2) (PC3200) RAM, 200G S-ATA150 7200rpm (8M) HDD, Liteon 812S 8x +/- DVDRW, Mitsumi 1.44MB Floppy Drive, ASUS R9600XT 128MB AGP8x VIVO, IEEE1394 / 10/100/1000 NIC, Integrated 6-Channel Audio, Dual Fan 400W Tower Case 2x USB @ front, Media Keyboard + Optical Mouse, Wooden Subwoofer + 2 Speakers

Intel Value
Intel Celeron D 2.4G—$376
Intel P4 - 2.4G (1M L2)—$439
Finance From $ 13 / Month
ECS PM800-M2 AGP8X MB, 256MB DDR333 (PC2700) RAM, 80GB 7200rpm HDD, 52x32x52 CDRW Drive, Mitsumi 1.44MB Floppy Drive, upto 64M Graphic + AGP 8X, Integrated 10/100 NIC, Integrated 3D Audio, 300W Tower Case w/ 2x USB, Windows 107key Keyboard, Wheel Mouse / 240W Speakers

Intel Power
Intel Celeron D 2.6G—$549
Intel P4 - 2.8G (1M L2)—$649
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Intel Gamer
Intel Celeron D 2.8G—$688
Intel P4 - 3.0G (1M L2)—$756
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Intel Premium
Intel Celeron D 2.8G—$759
Intel P4 - 3.0G (1M L2)—$849
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P4S800 / P4S800-MX—$86 / $87
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Intel Celeron D 2.4G / 2.6G / 2.8G—$97 / $123 / $186
Intel P4 (800FSB) 2.8G-E / 3.0G-E / 3.2G-E—$228 / $240 / $289
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Zippy WK-610 Turbo Office Keyboard—$39.99
Zippy WK 720 Slim Aluminum Keyboard—$37.99
Zippy Mini Electro luminescent Keyboard -$39.95
MS Optical Mouse / Media Keyboard—$13 / $8.99
Intel 56K Modem / USR 56K Modem—$16 / $25

The second limitation is that not all accessories are compatible. The BT accessories that work with the DC600 unit are: Motorola Wireless Car Kit, HF800 Portable Wireless Speaker, and HS800, HS810, and HS820 headsets. Hence, you are limited to certain phones and only certain Motorola BT accessories.

Esthetics

Personally, the DC600, looks strange, and out of place. You might think otherwise. The phone that I was given to test this with was a beautiful stylish V300. The adapter just didn't look that good on the phone. It adds a good 2 cm to the length of your phone, making it difficult to put in your pocket or small bag.

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Accessories

As mentioned before, at the time of writing only certain Motorola BT accessories are compatible with the DC600.

HF800 Speaker

With a futuristic design, full duplex, 3 hour talk time and built in microphone, speaker and volume control, the HF800 is approx 48mm x 82mm x 22mm, weighing about 60 grams. I liked the quality of the speaker. But I found it to be too bulky to carry around. The unique multifunction key on the top of the device answers, ends, and initiates calls while also controlling 3-way calling and call hold. This is a great gadget for hands free talking in your car or if you want to do conference calls. The price is about $120 from www.motorola.ca

HS820 Headset

I really liked the HS820 BT headset. It has a very nice design, compact, light and very functional. As with the HF800, you can answer and end calls by just clicking on the headset button. The quality of the speaker and the microphone are very good. The HS820 has an effective range of about 10m. It works great, and is small enough to carry around without being obtrusive. You can buy this unit for around $100.

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AMD Sempron 2400+ CPU
ASROCK K7S41GX_6XUSB2 0 W/8XAGP Port Mainboard
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80GB 7200rpm Hard Drive
Sony 1 44MB Floppy Drive
Up to 64MB AGP 3D Video(O/B)
AC97 3D Sound(O/B) 10/100 NIC(O/B)
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18" 300W & 2XUSB Tower Case
Logitech Optical Wheel Mouse
PS/2 Windows Keyboard
240W Speakers

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Sempron 2500+/2600+ $358/ $378
Sempron 2300+/3100+ $419/ $449

17" Monitor
Color Ink Jet Printer
600x1200dpi Scanner
+ $229

Intel Celeron System

Celeron D320-2.4 GHz CPU
ASROCK P4i45GV_6XUSB2 0
PC3200 256MB DDR400 (Infineon)
80GB 7200rpm Hard Drive
Sony 1 44 MB Floppy Drive
3D Graphic 4X AGP(O/B)
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LG 52X CD-ROM
18" 300W & 2XUSB Tower Case
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PS/2 Windows Keyboard
240W Speakers

$349

Celeron 330-2 6G/335-2 8G $369/$408
P4 2.4G/3.0G-1Mb Cache $418/$499

AMD Value System

AMD Sempron 2500+CPU
ASUS A7V400-MX_6xUSB2 0
256MB PC3200 DDR400 (Infineon)
80GB 7200rpm Herd Drive
Sony 1 44MB Floppy Drive
VIA 3D Graphic Card(O/B)
ADI SoundMax 6-Channel Sound(O/B)
VIA VT6103 10/100 Network Card(O/B)
LG 52x32x52 CD-RW Drive
18" 300W & 2XUSB Front Tower Case
Win Multimedia Internet Keyboard
Logitech Optical Wheel Mouse
780W 3D Speakers Syetem w/ Subwoofer

$409

Sempron 2800+/2800+ $428/$468
Sempron 3100+ $439
AOC FT700 17" Monitor Flat+ $139

AMD Power System

AMD Sempron 2600+CPU
ASUS A7V800-X_6xUSB2.0
256MB PC3200_DDR400 (Infineon)
WD 80GB 7200rpm-8MB HD
Sony 1 44MB Floppy Drive
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Microsoft Multimedia Keyboard
Microsoft Optical Wheel Mouse
Juster 3D Speakers Syetem w/ Subwoofer

$529

Sempron 2800+/3100+$568/$589
XP2800+/XP3000+ $599/$639
AOC FT700 17" Monitor Flat +$139

AMD Super System

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MSI K8T Neo-FSR_8xUSB2.0
512MB PC3200_DDR400 (Samsung)
Maxtor 160GB 7200rpm-8MB HD
Sony 1 44MB Floppy Dnve
MSI FX5200_TD128 128MB DDR_
TV out, DVI, 8XAGP Video Card
Realtek ALC655 6-Channel Audio(O/B)
Gigabit Lan ,Seriel ATA(O/B)
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18" 400W & 2XUSB Front Tower Case
Microsoft Multimedia Keyboard
Microsoft Optical Wheel Mouse
Juster 3D Speakers System w/ Subwoofer

$839

Athlon64 3200+/3400+ $909/$1009
AOC FT700 17" Monitor_Flat +$139

AMD Super+ System

AMD Athlon64 3200+ CPU
ASUS K8V-SE Deluxe_8xUSB2.0
1GB(512MBX2) DDR400 (Samsung)
Maxtor 200GB SATA(U150)-8MB HD
Sony 1 44MB Floppy Drive
MSI FX5700LE-TD128 128MB DDR_
TV out, DVI 8XAGP Video Card
ADI 1980 6-Channel 3D Sound (O/B)
Gigabit Lan, IEEE1394, Serial ATA(O/B)
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Microsoft Cordless Multimedia Kayboard
Microsoft Cordless Optical Wheel Mouse
Logitech Z-640 5 Speakers w/ Subwoofer

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Athlon64 3400+/3000+ $1359/$1189
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P4 Value System

Intel Celeron D33D 2.6GHz
ASUS P4VP-MX _6xUSB2.0
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80GB 7200rpm Hard Drive
Sony 1 44MB Floppy Drive
VIA ProSavage8 Graphics (O/B)
Realtek ALC655 6-channel Sound(O/B)
10/100 Network Card (O/B)
LG 52x32x52 CD-RW Drive
18" 300W & 2XUSB Front Tower Cass
Win Multimedia Internet Keyboard
Logitech Optical Wheel Mouse
780W 3D Speekers Syetem w/ Subwoofer

$419

D330-2.8G/D320-2 4G $449/$399
P4 2.4G/3.0G-1MB $469/$549
AOC FT700 17" Monitor_Flat+ $139

P4 Power System

Intel P4 2.4GHz CPU 1MB
ASUS P4V8X-X_8xUSB2.0
256MB PC3200_DDR400 (Infineon)
WD 80GB 7200rpm-8MB HD
Sony 1 44MB Floppy Drive
ATI Radeon 9200SE 128MB_DDR
_TV out, 8XAGP Video Card
ADI AD1980 6-channel 3D Sound (O/B)
10/100 Lan, 2XSeriel ATA (O/B)
LG 52X32X52 CD-RW Drive
18" P4 300W & 2XUSB Front Tower Case
Microsoft Multimedia Keyboard
Microsoft Optical Wheel Mouse
Juster 3D Speekers eyetem w/ Subwoofer

$569

3.0G/3.2G-1MB $649/$688
Celeron 2.4G/2.8G $509/529
AOC FT700 17" Monitor_Flat +$139

P4 Super System

Intel P4 3.0EGHz CPUFSB800 1MB
ASUS P4P800-E Deluxe 8xUSB2.0
512MB PC3200_DDR400 (Samsung)
Mextor 160GB 7200rpm-8MB HD
Sony 1 44MB Floppy Drive
MSI FX5200_TD128 128MB_DDR_
TV out, DVI, 8XAGP Video Card
Realtek ALC850 8-Channel CODEC(O/B)
Gigabit Lan IEEE1394,Serial ATA (O/B)
*Liteon 812S 8XDVD+-RW Drive
18" P4 400W & 2XUSB Front Tower Case
Microsoft Multimedia Keyboard
Microsoft Dptical Wheel Mouse
Juster 3D Speekers System w/ Subwoofer

$909

P4 3.2EG/3 4EGFSB800 $959/$1089
AOC FT700 17" Monitor_Flat +$139

P4 Super+ System

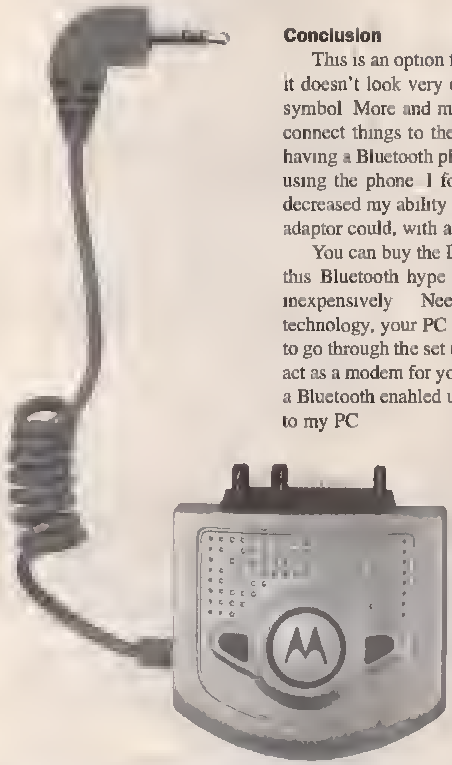
Intel P4 540 3.2GHz CPU 2MB
ASUS P5GD1-VM I915G_8xUSB2 0
1GB(512MBX2) DDR400 (Semsung)
Maxtor 200GB SATA(U150)-8MB HD
Sony 1 44MB Floppy Dnve
Intel up to 224MB 3D Graphics (O/B)
Realtek ALC 861 8-Channel Sound(O/B)
10/100 Lan 4XSeriel ATA(O/B)
*LG GSA-4120B Dual Leyer 12XDVD + -RW Drive
18" P4 Dual Fan 450W &2XUSB Front Case
Microsoft Cordless Multimedia Keyboard
Microsoft Cordless Optical Wheel Mouse
Logitech Z-640 5 Speakers w/ Subwoofer

$1149

P4 530 3.0G/550 3.4G $1088/$1229
LG 1710S 17" LCD +$439

All advertised prices reflect 3.0% cash discount

All Systems come with 1 year parts and 3 years labour hardware



Conclusion

This is an option for people who don't want to change their phones. It does work, but it doesn't look very cool especially in a time when cell phones are a power and status symbol. More and more people look for smaller and more compact designs rather than connect things to their phone that make them look bulkier. Also, one of the points of having a Bluetooth phone is to be able to put the phone away and do your talking without using the phone. I found the 2 cm that the adaptor added to the phone physical size, decreased my ability to put the phone in my pocket to use the earpiece. As well, I felt the adaptor could, with a little force, be snapped off the phone.

You can buy the DC600 for around $50. It's cheap and if you wanted to see what all this Bluetooth hype is about, you could try it out on your existing phone relatively inexpensively. Needless to say, to fully appreciate the experience of Bluetooth technology, your PC has to have Bluetooth capability, as well. If you have the patience to go through the set up with your telephone and PC, you can even use your BT phone to act as a modem for your PC and connect to the Internet. I found by turning my phone into a Bluetooth enabled unit, I was able to download images that I had taken with my phone to my PC.

Pros

- Cheap way to test out BT
- Easy to setup. No complex phone menus
- Pairing established with one click of a button

Cons

- Works only with certain phones and only with certain Motorola BT accessories
- Esthetically not pleasing
- Makes the phone larger (longer) by 2cm
- Can snap off the phone too easily

Blackberry Revisited

By Babak Khonsari

In the August issue I reviewed the Telus Blackberry 7510. After talking with the Telus reps, I realized that my review only scratched the surface of "Mike", an important feature of the Telus Blackberry. So, to complete my work, here is a follow up on the Mike feature 7510.

Now imagine the scenario; you go to the PNE with your family, everybody scatters around doing their own thing. You want to make plans for everyone to meet somewhere or just find out how they are doing, but you don't want to play voicemail tag, or dial every individual person to tell them the same thing. You take out your phone, you type in the group number, and you are instantly connected to everyone. You tell them where to meet you, at what time, and then you end the conversation. The whole thing takes maybe 15 seconds. This is basically what the Telus Mike "Direct Connect" can do. This technology is exclusive to Telus in Canada.

Now imagine your family being your clients or co-workers, instead of the PNE, your playground covers all of Canada from Vancouver Island to Eastern Quebec and most of the US. Mike combines digital PCS, "Direct Connect" walkie-talkie, text messaging, and "always on" internet, using the iDEN (integrated digital enhanced network) technology. You can create "Talkgroups" and access the whole group with one call, or talk directly with one individual in the group. You save money and become more productive by making concise rather than lengthy conversation calls. Obviously, the biggest disadvantage to this system is that everyone in your group must have a Mike system otherwise it won't work. But if you do have a group of people working together who need to stay in constant communication as to their whereabouts, Mike is your best solution. Available through Telus Canada.

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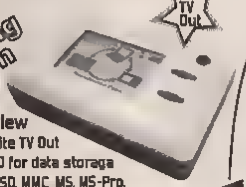

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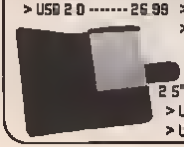

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SAMSUNG SYNCMASTER 710T LCD Monitor

By Babak Khonsari

Specs

17" viewable area
1280x1024 native resolution
DVI/VGA interface
264mm pixel pitch
Suggested retail price $850 CDN

Dimensions

Depth 7 5"
Height 16".
Width 14 6".
Weight 12 8 lbs

If I were buying a computer system on a small budget, I'd buy a slower CPU, and with the money I save, I'd splurge on a good monitor. For me, the truth is that for the applications that I use, I can't really tell the difference if I have a 1 9GHZ CPU or a 3 4 What I can tell, though, is the difference between a nice large bright LCD screen and a small, blurry CRT screen It's so important to have a good monitor for your system The larger the screen, the more windows you can open at the same time and the less stress you put on your eyes

In general, there are two main types of PC monitors standard CRT and the LCD flat panels The flat panels were for the longest time not the recommended choice for gamers. The majority had 18 bits of color, and slower than 60 frames per sec rate. The low refresh rates resulted in blurriness and ghosting On top of that, they were very expensive compared to the CRTs

I recently got the chance to play with a Samsung 710T LCD Monitor (www samsungcanada ca) The first thing I noticed is how much space I gained on my desktop by replacing my CRT monitor with the flat panel Not only is the 710 very space efficient, you can even go further by mounting it on a wall, so there is actually no space taken by the monitor at all on your desktop. Another cool feature that I like is that you can rotate the screen 90 degrees (portrait mode). I find this helpful, when trying to read PDF files or browsing on the net, where most pages are longer than they are wide

Picture Quality

The 710T can handle full 32 bit color display, as well as a refresh rate of 30-81 KHz horizontal and 56-75 vertical It delivers 600 1 contrast ratio, has a brightness of 300 cd/m_ compared to 250 cd/m_ for the 17" Viewsonic and 260 cd/m_ for the 17" NEC. With a response rate of only 12ms (compared to 16ms for most other LCDs), this monitor can deliver even with demanding video applications. The 710T has both analog and Digital Video Input (DVI) Most video cards are including DVI along with analog as their outputs The advantage being that there is no loss in picture quality because of digital to analog conversion. You feed the monitor direct digital signal

Conclusion

The 17" Samsung 710T is impressive with both its high image quality and slick design I am amazed at how little quality difference I can see when playing at 1024x768 rather than the native resolution of 1280x1024. The ultra-thin bezel and removable base make putting monitors side by side very easy Although, there is some slight blurriness, it is not obvious at all. The extra dollars that you pay, instead of buying a CRT monitor will go a long way in terms of investment for your eyes and productivity

Pros

Slim design, high resolution, bright picture, dual input,

Cons

None for the monitor itself

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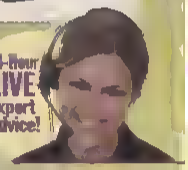

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Brother's Just Released NEW Label Printer ql-550

By Joshua Paul

The install was a breeze, done before opening the plastic bag with the single sheet Quickstart guide I just wanted to plug it in and turn it on. After plugging the AC cable in (thankfully no power brick - however the cord is attached to the unit) - I went to plug in the USB cable. The slot on the printer was blocked by a sticker that told me to install the software first and only plug the USB cable in when instructed. Excellent!

Getting the printer ready for printing was easy. I was ready to install one of the two sample labels included. The labels come on plastic spindles that have a specific number of holes on their base, so the printer is able to recognize which size label has been installed. For example, the 62mm wide label has 2 holes in its base, where as the standard address label 29mm X 90mm has 4 holes. I chose to install the standard address label spindle and was now ready to install the software

The software installed with the usual number of next > next > next mouse clicks. Brother includes a label editor for those one off jobs - but this product is most useful when connected to a database that will print 100 or so mailing labels at a time (the enclosed PTouch Editor software includes the ability to read databases as well). So, I launched Filemaker Pro where we keep our mailing list for the magazine, chose print setup and was delighted to discover the printer driver had default settings for the label dimensions. Hence, I picked what I thought was the right one and went to print

A window from the Brother printer driver software popped up to alert me that the document I had chosen to print was the wrong size for the label installed. I went back and checked - and sure enough I had chosen the wrong label. I selected the correct label - and set it to print in landscape mode and printed my first label. I was impressed by three things - the quickness, the quietness and the quality.

The Brother printer uses special heat sensitive paper - no ink cartridges or toner to change. However, this does mean that you are restricted to buying label supplies from Brother. (Brother Canada http://www.brother.ca)

Printer Features:

- Fast printing of high-quality labels
- Prints up to 50 4-line standard address labels per minute and prints on continuous tape, up to 2.3" wide for banners and signage.
- Automatic Tape Cutter - Automatically feeds and cuts the label after printing.
- Thermal print technology eliminates toner, ink and ribbon costs
- Connects easily to PCs via a USB port, version 1.1
- Easy-to-load drop-in supplies
- Optional print server (PS-9000 available - additional purchase required) for network environments or use a networked computer
- Wide selection of label types, perfect for almost any labeling application
- Compact size - only 5 7" (w) x 7 7" (d) x 6" (h).

Pros

The advantages of the systems are: ease of installation, good drivers, low maintenace, auto sensing label size and first label usability.

Cons

The things I did not like are: it uses special thermal paper, tech support phone number not listed on printed material and a long waiting time once I did reach tech support (found phone number on web site)

Costs

Average street price is $190 CDN and standard address labels for 400 labels $30 or about $.08 each ◗

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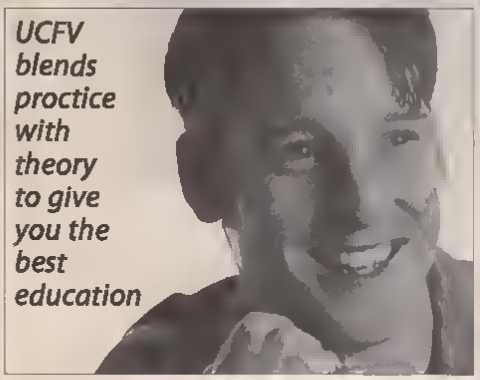

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The LCF P4 System

By Babak Khonsari

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Mother Board	Intel 0865PERLK P4/Celeron M/B, mPGA478, 800/533/400-FSB, SATA, AGP8X, audio, 1G LAN, IEEE1394, 4x0DR400 dual-channel max 4GB, 5xPCI (Intel 865PE chipset)
Memory	1GB dual-channel configuration 400MHz PC3200 DDR DIMM (using 2 x 512MB)
Video	Sapphire ATI Radeon 9550 AGP8X video card, 256MB DDR
Hard drive	2x 80 GB Seagate SATA hard drive, 7200rpm, 8MB cache- (RAID1)
CD	LG 40828 DVD+/-RW EIDE drive, OEM (BLACK)
Keyboard / Mouse	Microsoft Multimedia keyboard with Optical Mouse
Speakers	Altec Lansing 120 (Black) stereo speakers
Extras	9-IN-1 Removable media reader USB 2 0 144MB Panasonic floppy disk
Case	17' 42728 P4 tower case with 300W power supply, air-guide, front USB 2 0, screwless
Warranty	3-year parts and 6-year labor limited depot warranty on CPU, motherboard, memory, floppy drive CD-ROM (IDE), video card (except special order), internal modem, standard network adapter sound card, and chassis only
Retail Price	$1579
Company	www lcf com

Recently, I received a system from LCF (www lcf com) to review The price tag for this system is around $1600 before tax. So I had to see what it was about this computer system that would warrant someone to spend so much, when you can buy a pretty decent computer for much cheaper

CPU

The heart of this computer is the Intel P4 Prescott , 3 2GHZ processor with 800MHZ bus speed Intel systems have a reputation for stability and performance At the same time, high end Intel CPUs tend to be much more expensive than the competition (AMD) This CPU is great for all graphic applications and gaming and has an average price of $325

Motherboard

This package also includes an Intel motherboard, built specifically for the P4 with "Hyper-Threading" technology, supporting the 800MHZ bus system as well as the Intel "RAID" technology There are 4 slots for memory, with maximum of 4GB supported. Other features include 5 PCI slots, 1 AGP (support for 1X, 4X, 8X) , 8 USB ports and 1 LAN Separately this motherboard can be purchased for around $150.

Memory

This computer is packed with 1GB of 400MHZ DDR DIMM memory (two 512MB modules) These are your normal generic memory modules If I were buying a top of the line system, I would go a little further and buy the best memory possible. The price difference is only maybe $100 more, but you know you would be utilizing your CPU to its maximum availability

Video Card

The Raedon ATI 9550 video card has DVI, CRT, as well as TV ports, with 256 MB on board memory. The 9550 is optimized for 3D gaming without putting too much stress on the CPU. For most applications and games, this video card would do. It is mid-range and the price is pretty good.

Storage

The motherboard has a built in RAID 1 controller LCF has utilized this feature by having two separate 80 GB Seagate hard drives. Then we have the LG DVD+/-RW EIDE, along with a removable Multi-card reader

Conclusion

This is a nice powerful system, in terms of CPU and motherboard, both are top of the line, high-end modules. The memory cards and the video card were mid range and as for storage capabilities, this unit is great. I like the DVD burner, as well as the removable multi-card reader. The multi-card readers are becoming a norm in most computer setups. I would have liked to have a separate sound card instead of using the on board one The speakers were adequate for normal everyday usage. Overall, I like the system, but I don't know if I would pay almost $1600 for it The great thing about getting custom packages is that you can configure your package depending on your needs I use my computer mostly for programming and sometimes video editing. My needs are a large hard drive, RAM, and strong CPU Gamers would need a stronger video card, high-end RAM as well as the CPU. To modify the above configuration to suit your needs, get in touch with the LCF sales (www.lcf.com)

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HP R707 digital Camera

By Babak Khonsari

It seems that HP is making a come back with their digital photography equipment, from cameras to scanners and excellent printers. The 5.1 mega pixel HP R707 is one of the latest cameras from HP, and it comes with a multitude of surprises

Body and Style

The camera is designed to fit nicely in the hand. The dimensions are 2 inches high by 4 inches wide. The front of the camera is silver, while the back is covered with black rubber that gives it a good smooth grip. There is a 1 1/2 inch high resolution LCD panel, with nicely spaced, intuitive buttons.

Picture Quality

The R707, although designed as a "point and shoot", gives great control over the way your pictures will turn out. The zoom lens cover 39 – 117 mm, giving a 3X optical zoom. You have the choice of 5, 3, 1 or custom Mega pixel pictures. There are 10 shooting modes and manual controls for EV comp, quality and white balance, ISO speed, AE metering, adaptive lighting, colour, saturation, sharpness, contrast and bracketing.

The main feature of this camera is the "Adaptive lighting technology". This technological feature automatically adjusts the light aperture for high contrast situations, allowing detail to appear in shadowy areas and backgrounds.

There is also the in-camera red eye removal feature. The traditional way for cameras to handle the red eye problem is to use the red eye flash. When you notice red eye problems while viewing your pictures, you can correct them easily by choosing the red eye removal option. Within 10 seconds, the screen refreshes with squares around the places it detects as red eyes. If you agree the squares are correctly placed, you click on yes and the changes are made.

The panoramic mode lets you connect up to 5 pictures together, to give you a wider view of your surroundings. You can preview the complete panoramic picture in the camera.

Video recording

The R707 can record 320x240 videos with audio at 30fps. I took some videos with the camera. The quality is good while viewing on a small screen, but viewing on a TV, the picture is totally distorted. This is not a DV camera. Movie size depends on the free memory size available. The movies are saved in MPEG format.

Other features

There is 32MB built in memory, which is enough to take up to 17 pictures at 5 MP. The memory expansion slot takes SD/MMC memory cards. Minimum shutter speed is from 16 seconds up to a maximum of 1/2000 seconds. The flash has an effective range of 9 feet and you can take 3 frames per second with the continuous shooting mode.

Docking cradle

The cradle, sold separately, is a great accessory to the R707. It comes with a remote control and an extra battery. The camera can be set in the cradle and with the remote control the pictures can be viewed without having to play around with the camera buttons. The extra battery sits inside a compartment in the cradle, so you always have a fully charged battery at hand.

Conclusion

This is a "point and shoot" camera. Even with all its features, if you are looking for a professional camera with complete aperture and lighting controls, look into something else. You are definitely getting your money's worth, though. The great adaptive lighting features plus the very cool panorama stitching makes this camera a perfect tool for anyone in the real estate/landscaping profession. It's a nice light camera, fast response with good manual options and very esthetically pleasing. You can buy the R707 for around $450 CDN (www.hp.ca)

PROS

Nice design
Compact
Easy to use
Quickly powers up for shoot

CONS

Slow to take repeated shots
Charger is slow, takes about 5 to 7 hours for charging the battery

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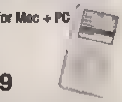

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DELL DIGITAL Jukebox

By Jason Sum

My editor recently asked me to review the new DELL Digital Jukebox for this month's issue of the magazine. For those of you who don't know, this is Dell's product offering in the personal mp3 player market. It comes in two storage options, a 15 and 20GB model. I got my hands on the 15GB model, which according to Dell ca equates to over 3700 songs, which in my eyes are more than enough for me. This unit weighs in at about 7 6 oz. It comes with a fixed rechargeable Li-Ion Polymer battery that provides up to 16 hours of battery life, an easy to read indigo 2" display and built in equalizer.

There are a couple neat features about this player that stand out. There is a one touch system for voice recordings up to 10 minutes in length. If you're ever in a bind, and don't have a pad and pen, why not record yourself a little note instead? (Or if you love listening to yourself talk, record yourself talk). Also, the Jukebox has the ability to store to this device other file types such as documents and photos from your local hard drive.

I found the Jukebox really stylish and the scroll wheel made navigation through my various play-lists and albums a breeze. Downloading tracks onto the jukebox was as easy as drag and drop through the Dell File Manager.

The Jukebox did not seem to give me the option to transfer uploaded mp3 or data files onto my other computer at the office, which I found frustrating. I remember I could do that with my old Roxio mp3 player. Apparently, this device does not act like those popular USB portable storage devices or other mp3 players on the market. Also, I could not seem to find where to delete all the tracks and start from scratch on the unit, which is equally bizarre. I really wish Dell had made this Mac compatible as well. I am more of a Mac guy but luckily I have a PC at home too. I think they have a good product here but could potentially capture more market share if the Jukebox could work with the Mac.

The jukebox is certainly great value for what you get and cheaper than the popular iPod from Apple. If your looking for a low cost alternative to the other mp3 players on the market, and don't want to shell out the money, the Dell Digital Jukebox is a good choice. Approximate $329 CDN. (www.dell.ca)

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17 ATX Case W/350W P4 Power supply
256MB DDR400 RAM & 2ml CASE FAN
INTEGRATED AC 97 3D AUDIO/10/100 LAN/USB
AMD Sempron 2400+ 256K /333FSB CPU
$225
AMD Sempron 2600+ 256K /333FSB CPU
$255
AMD Sempron 2800+ 256K /333FSB CPU
$285

System Upgrade (For
ASROCK 775i65GV LGA775 AGP Mot
17 ATX CASE W/350W P4
256MB DDR 400 RAM &
Integrated 5.1ch Audio
Intel Pentium IV 520
$399
Intel Pentium IV
455

Microsoft Internet Keyboard PS/2(Retail box)

$29 — 17 ATX Tower case with 350W Power Supply

$29 — DVD R 4x 50 PACK CD-R 48x 50 PACK

$69 — Logitech QuickCam Pro 4000 Webcam (white box)

$49 — Lexmark Z705 Photo Color Jet printer

$10 — Labtec Axis-602 Neckband Stereo Headset with Mic & Volume Control

$49 — Logitech Pocket Digital Camera (white box)

$55 — Logitech Cordless Navigator Duo Optical mouse & KB (Retail box)

$35 — Logitech QuickCam Messenger Webcam DVE

$73 — Toshiba 8x8x DVD+/-RW Drive IDE (bulk packing)

$79 — Sapphire Radeon 9550 128mb AGP display Card

$169 — Samsung ML1740 Laser Printer

$19 — Logitech Cordless Click Optical mouse USB (Retail box)

$95 — Benq Dw1628 16x16x DVD+/-RW Drive IDE (bulk packing)

$97 — DDR 400 512MB Memory

$96 — Maxtor 120 Gb 7200rpm Hard Disk Drive IDE

$58 — Radeon 9200se 128mb AGP Display Card w/TVO/DVI

$63 — CoolerMaster CAC-T02-WW Aluminum Case

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Sony Hard Disk Multiplayer HMP-A1

ByBabak Khonsari

It seems that more and more companies are putting emphasis on mobile media devices. The Sony Multiplayer HMP-A1, (currently only available to the Japanese market but obtainable through ICUBE www.icube.us) is one such device. It's simply art at its best. I was really impressed with how Sony has paid so much attention to detail and quality with this model. Built into this small compact unit (5.1" x 2.97" X .86") is a 3.5" LCD, 20GB HD. You can view pictures and video (MPEG, MPEG2, MPEG4, WMV, AVI and DVR-MS formats), and listen to MP3 music. To add to its usability, the HMP-A1 has a RCA video out port, so you can easily connect your multiplayer to the TV and watch your saved shows on the big screen. I found this feature very convenient, as the usual way to watch movies downloaded from the Internet for me involves having to connect my laptop to my TV.

Storage

The 20GB HD built into the multiplayer is large enough to watch over 20 hours of video. There is no memory expansion slot. To download or view any files, you must be connected to the computer and have the correct software. I tried drag and dropping MP3 files into the unit, but I could not find the files afterwards.

Video

The built-in LCD screen is very clear and has very good resolution. I found though, that watching videos in daylight it was not clear. The outer screen cover is very shinny and reflective. To transfer video from your computer to the device, you need the special software that checks for the format of the videos. Some videos transfer without conversion and some need conversion for the software to download them into the device. The conversion process is quite long. For a 500MB video that I had downloaded, it took more than an hour to convert and be transferred into the multiplayer.

Audio

The multiplayer has no built in speakers, sound output is through the headphone jacks; nonetheless, sound quality from the device is great. The unit comes with a remote control and Sony headphones.

Pics

I wasn't very impressed with this feature. As you might have guessed, you can download and view JPEGs with the multiplayer. Even though the quality of the display is good, the viewer is really slow loading the pictures. In addition, there is no way of organizing the pictures into folders or categories. If you want to occupy the whole storage space with images, you would have to put everything in one folder. Imagine how it would be, having to look for a certain picture from a folder of thousands. Not a pretty sight!

Navigation Buttons

With this device, Sony introduces the "touch sensor" navigation system that allows the user to navigate through the menu system by just sliding their finger up, down, left and right, an interesting feature. But if you are left handed, this feature seems half finished. For the lefty, you can go into the setup and have the screen be rotated so you can hold and navigate with your left hand. However, what the designers forgot to do is to change the button settings! So now, if you want to go left in the menu, you have to slide your finger right, and if you want to go down the menu, you have to slide up.

Conclusion

I found myself using this player almost everyday. The feature I loved most was its RCA out port. It literally freed my videos from my computer. It would have been nicer if there were more storage and even a memory expansion slot. Being able to take family videos along in a small unit, the size of a PDA, and playing them wherever was bliss. With a full battery you can watch 6 hours of video, or listen to 8 hours of music. The unit can be bought from ICUBE (www.icube.us) for $699 USD. With currency conversion and maybe import taxes you are looking at almost $900 CDN.

PROS

- TV out port
- "Touch Sensor" navigation buttons
- Small light compact design
- High-resolution screen.
- Good battery life

CONS

- No memory expansion port.
- Some video files have to be converted, lengthy process
- Left-handed navigation feature more confusing than helpful
- Screen hard to view in daylight
- Expensive
- Limited storage
- Picture viewer is slow
- No options for categorizing/filing pictures

Tapping into e-Commerce

By Sheena Daniels, eBusiness Connection

In 1886, a railroad telegraph operator used his telegraph to sell an errant shipment of watches he had obtained, to his fellow employees. The extra money he made allowed him to quit his job and start his own company. The man's name was Richard Sears and the company was Sears Roebuck.

A mere ten years after the invention of the telephone, sixty-five years before we would begin to experiment with first generation computers, Sears tapped into the future and the advantages of 'selling online'.

Now, more than a century later, the Internet has become a lure for eager sellers seeking new delivery channels. This shouldn't be surprising, since selling online can offer many benefits over conventional sales methods.

Why wouldn't you set up shop on the Internet when:

- You can lower your up front set-up costs and operational costs with virtual store-fronts and reduced staffing needs
- You can be 'open' 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week to a global marketplace
- You can automate your order processing, and improve your order tracking capabilities
- You can develop cheaper online catalogues that allow you to update your product lists on the fly
- You can build an online store that allows your customers to shop in different ways, building their orders over time, saving their favorites in a wish list, customizing their orders, comparison shopping and searching large catalogs easily?

And now it's easier than ever to get started with cheap e-commerce hosting solutions such as Yahoo! Merchant Starter, Store Sense, bCentral Commerce Manager, Bigstep FreeMerchant Silver and more. (By the way, PC Magazine offers a recent review of seven popular low-cost options at http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1759,1558850,00.asp.)

But, selling online and actually generating sales are not one in the same. Success on the Internet does require a number of necessary steps.

First, you need a solid business model, and not every business model adapts well to the Internet. Shoes may be a good example here. Unless you are selling a well-known brand of shoes that your customers may have the opportunity to try on in a physical store, you may be hard-pressed to get people to buy shoes online. There's just too much risk that they won't fit properly. Test market your product first to ensure online sales is right for you.

Then, you need to ensure people can find your website – this is where search engine optimization and Internet marketing are critical. The majority of Internet users find websites through search engines such as Google and Yahoo. Ideally, you want to rank on the first page of a search engine to ensure you get a maximum amount of traffic.

Once you've got the traffic, you need to get your visitors to buy. The online channel will test your sales skills; industry research says that up to seventy-five percent of shoppers abandon their online shopping carts before completing the checkout process.

Selling online can be tricky, as you can't rely on sensory persuasion (other than sight) or the desire for instant gratification that often comes with shopping. Therefore, professional looking, obviously secure websites, functional, fast, intuitive shopping carts and well marketed, well explained, quality product lines go a long way towards getting that sale.

Then, consider client retention. Persuading people to buy once is no guarantee that they will return to purchase again. As a result, client-focused customer service policies are a must.

Finally, security risk management should not be underestimated. Mark Gartenberg at Computerworld warns, the risks of venturing into e-commerce without adequate security include "fraud, loss of intellectual property, damaged customer and partner relationships, unforeseen costs, public relations debacles, and business disruptions".

Above all, ensure your site and transaction methods are secure. Develop a strong terms of use agreement which sets the circumstances by which you do business – have it vetted by a lawyer. Set strict privacy protection standards and write an online privacy policy, in plain language for your customers.

Always balance the advantages against the risks before jumping into an e-commerce venture. Do your research, test market your product, and develop a user-friendly, secure online shopping experience. Tapping into e-commerce can be lucrative -- if you've done your homework and understand how it to make it work.

Sheena is a freelance business writer, e-business consultant and project coordinator of eBusiness Connection (eBC). eBC is a BC-based e-business resource centre for small businesses offering e-business advising, learning and research facilities. Sheena can be reached at sdaniels@e-bc.ca or visit the eBC website at www.e-bc.ca

TEST THE E-COMMERCE WATERS WITH EBAY

By Robert Lewis, eBusiness Connection

To go online or not to go online – that is still the question for many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) wondering if they can profit from e-commerce. Unfortunately, many of them are choosing not to go online for fear of losing what they feel would be a significant investment in an e-commerce solution. If only they could predict the future and determine their return on investment before building their e-commerce website.

Well, maybe they can, to a degree. Many SMEs overlook eBay (www.ebay.com) as a way to test the e-commerce waters. Take a closer look at this e-commerce services provider and you'll see it has more to offer than just a forum for auctioning unwanted personal items.

Is your product viable online?

Stories abound about businesses spending months putting up a website, expecting to make tons of money, without first checking to see if their product is viable online. A plethora of pet food suppliers did just this during the dot-com craze, only to find out later that consumers weren't willing to pay for the convenience of shopping from home when it meant adding the cost of shipping a 40lb bag of dog food to their bill. Test marketing their concept would have saved these suppliers time and money and reinforced the importance of their proven sales channel – retail outlets.

Is your product viable online? Selling on eBay may help you find out.

eBay as a market research tool

When it comes to market research, surveying people about how much they are willing to spend for a product doesn't necessarily translate into people actually spending their hard-earned dollars. Market research is much more valuable when you can quantify your data.

Before going through the expense of building an online store, find out if people will really spend money for your product. Consider test marketing your concept through a sales channel like eBay. The concept of test marketing isn't anything new, but the online market actually makes market testing easier and more economical.

eBay offers a global testing ground that will cost you next to nothing to get started. Within a few hours, you can present your concept in three different ways for three different prices and observe real market behavior. Further, browsing eBay allows you to gather competitive intelligence by comparing your competitor's services, prices and apparent successes.

eBay makes marketing easy

eBay receives an incredible amount of traffic and does all the marketing for you. On any given day, there are more than 12 million items listed on eBay – clearly making this forum the "World's Online Marketplace™". eBay's name recognition, combined with their continued investment in Internet marketing and affiliate programs, means you don't need to worry about marketing your product elsewhere on the Web. If you are running an existing business and have not yet ventured onto the Internet, eBay represents a low-cost and low-risk way of augmenting your existing marketing strategy.

Selling on eBay allows you to convert inventory into cash and aquire practical online sales experience. You learn how to position your product, provide customer service, fine tune product delivery, and increase profit margins – all vital for business success. Once you've developed your expertise and found out that your product is in fact viable in this arena, it may then be worthwhile to add e-commerce functionality to your own website.

Expand your sales horizons

SMEs in smaller communities may find that they have tapped the local market for their product, especially if they are selling a niche product. eBay can open up new markets and help SMEs find customers who may be willing to pay a premium for products they may not otherwise be able to acquire. This willingness to pay more for something not readily available in your local market can sometimes make the online sales channel more profitable for SMEs than having a traditional storefront.

For example, by selling on eBay a Canadian aboriginal artist may be able to tap into the growing global demand for original, rare, or distinctively cultural treasures. Many artisans and craftspeople have developed a strong following by starting on eBay and moving on to their own online storefronts after establishing themselves.

This is not to say that eBay is a one-size-fits-all panacea for SMEs, but it is certainly worth considering as an easy and cost effective way to test market your products before making the leap online.

Do you think Shakespeare could have ever predicted that an eBook version of MacBeth would one day be available for $1.99 on the Internet? Perhaps, if he had been able to test market his works on eBay, it wouldn't have come as a surprise.

Robert Lewis is an e-Business Consultant and Project Director for eBusiness Connection www.e-bc.ca. He can be reached at rlewis@e-bc.ca.

Did you remember to call the DVD recorder?

Panasonic's new DMR-E500H has a 400GB hard disk drive, is capable of zapping video elsewhere in a home, and is designed to let consumers program recording remotely over the Internet--including via cell phones. The DMR-E500H, billed as allowing for more than 700 hours of recorded video, demonstrates the growing capabilities of devices combining DVD recording with hard drives. A hybrid between traditional DVD recorders and so-called digital video recorders, such machines allow users to begin watching a show from an earlier moment in a live broadcast. Panasonic said the DMR-E500H offers high-speed dubbing from its hard disk drive onto DVD-RAM and DVD-R discs. The machine can record a 1-hour program onto a DVD-R disc in just 56 seconds, according to Panasonic. The product comes with an Ethernet port and a broadband receiver, Panasonic said. With the Ethernet connection, MPEG4 video and JPEG photos can be viewed on a PC in another room, the company said. Using two DMR-E500Hs, MPEG2 video on one can be accessed by the other on the local area network.

iRobot: New Way of Cleaning with Roomba Red Robotic Floorvecs

iRobot, creator of Roomba(R), the first affordable robotic vacuum, announced today that its new Roomba Red robotic floorvac is now available at select Canadian Tire stores throughout Canada. Shaped like a Frisbee and low enough to get under most beds and bureaus without help, Roomba Red gives people the ability to clean their homes more effectively and efficiently than ever before. Roomba Red is part of the new Roomba Discovery line of breakthrough robotic vacuum cleaners that offer enhanced dirt detection systems, a self-charging Home Base(TM), longer battery run time and faster charging.

65V-inches World's Largest LCD Color TV

Sharp Corporation has successfully developed a 65V-inch AQUOS LCD color TV, the industry's first and world's largest. The TV's full-spec, high-definition, 6 22-million-dot panel is manufactured at the Kameyama Plant, an integrated LCD TV production facility for complete manufacturing from panel fabrication to final TV assembly.

Such a quantum leap in screen size - well beyond the 45V-inch size that many thought was the limit for LCDs shows that LCD technology still has plenty of room to evolve and grow.

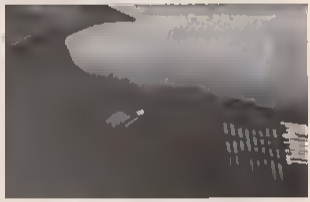
Tungsten T5: Industry's First 256MB Storage Handheld

Nearly doubling the industry's current handheld storage maximum, palmOne, Inc. today introduced the Tungsten(TM) T5 handheld with 256MB of flash memory. The Tungsten T5 gives productivity-minded mobile professionals the ability to carry more data and applications than ever before on a handheld, for an estimated U.S. street price of $399.

SanDisk Introduces World's Festest Flash Memory - SanDisk Extreme™ III

SanDisk® Corporation (NASDAQ-SNDK) today introduced the world's fastest flash memory cards – the SanDisk Extreme™ III line of CompactFlash, SD™ and Memory Stick PRO™ digital film cards. The CompactFlash and SD cards have minimum write and read speeds of 20 megabytes per second. Memory Stick PRO has minimum write and read speeds of 18 MB/sec. The SanDisk Extreme III cards, which range in capacity between one and four gigabytes (GB), have essentially double the performance speeds of SanDisk's predecessor Extreme product line which currently has the fastest working cards in many of today's leading digital single lens reflex (SLR) cameras.

IBM Unveils First Biometric ThinkPad, Offering Security at Your Fingertips



IBM is taking computing security and data protection to the next level today with the introduction of the first ThinkPad with an integrated fingerprint reader. ThinkPad, already the industry's most secure notebook PC, now features a model that delivers simplified access to password-protected personal and financial information, web sites, documents and e-mail while offering an unmatched level of data protection through its new biometric capability and embedded security subsystem.

First-Ever Mobile Music Store from AT&T

Service turns the mobile phone into a 'Remote Control' for PC downloads of digital music tracks.

Building on the success of the company's Music ID service, AT&T Wireless today announced the premier of the mMode Music Store, making the entire music discovery, sampling, and purchase process mobile for the first time in U.S. history. With the AT&T Wireless mMode Music Store, customers can discover, browse, listen to and purchase digital music tracks from a library of approximately 750,000 songs -- all right from the handset. Built in cooperation with Loudeye and Microsoft, the mobile music store is seamlessly integrated with the PC, so digital music tracks are downloaded to users' Windows PCs and billed automatically to their monthly AT&T Wireless statement or credit card.

Component	NCIX (p.2, 32)	Compconnex (p 9)	A-Power	SoneXPC	Vastech (p.11)	TigerDirect.ca (p.17)
CPU	Intel Celeron 2.8GHz 400FSB	Intel Celeron 2.8GHz 400FSB	AMD Athlon™ Sempron 2800+ 256KB	INTEL P4 533FSB 2.4GHZ w/1MB CACHE	Intel P4 2.1a (Prescott)	Intel Celeron 2.8GHZ
Motherboard	Soltek 865GLR 533/800FSB 4 PCI	ECS P4VMM2 533FSB PC2700 DDR 333Mhz	Asus A7V400X MX ATX Mainbord	ECS P4VMM2 V5.0A 533FSB w/VGA Audio Lan & USB2.0	Asus P4VPMX/S478/VIA P4M266A/Micro ATX/3 PCI/1 AGP4	
Ram	256MB DDR 333MHZ PC2700	512MB	512 MB PC3200 DDRAM (Samsung) Memory	PC3200 256MB DDR400 (MAJOR)	256MB PC-2700 DDR-RA	512MB DDR 333 PC-2700
Lan	On board	On board	Integrated 10/100 PCI	Integrated 10/100 Lan	10/100 Networking Integrated	Integrated LAN support
Video Card	On board	On board	Integrated 3D AGP (up to 64M)	On Board 32MB MAX VIDEO	Integrated 3D Graphic Power + AGP Slot	ATI Radeon 7000 64MB on Board
Monitor	LG 17" 27mm	19" BenQ FP929E .25mm 1600X1200@85HZ	AOC 17" FT700 .26 1280X1024	MAG 17" 772PFS Flat .25mm 1280X1024	MAG 786PF 17in 1600x1200 Flat Monitor	Dell 17" CRT 1024 X 768
Hard Drive	SEAGATE 40GB	Maxtor 40GB	Maxtor 80GB 7200RPM ATA 133	MAXTOR DiamondMax Plus 9 80GB 7200RPM 2MB ATA133	80G 7200rpm Hard Drive	80 GO HD
Sound Card	On Board	On Board	Integrated 5.1 surround sound	On board AC97 5.1 sound SoneXPC 2.1 Subwoofer 450W	AC 97 3D Sound Integrated	Integrated Audio 6 channe
Speakers	ADPEN CW	Multimedia speaker	2 Satellite multimedia speakers w/subwoofer	-	160W Speakers	Cristaux labs Inspire 5.1 5200
Printer Scanner Case	LEXMARK Z605 8/14PPM	HP PSC 1210 All in One 12/10 PPM 4800DPI	HP PSC 1210 All-in-One	SoneXPC 16 .8000UL ATX w/350W PS	LXK X5150 All-in-one scan/print/copy 4800X1200	Lexmark X1150 All in one Printer
	17in ATX 10 drive bays	power ATX front USB/Audio 300 W	18" ATX-styled (w/ Front USB model#768-PL)	LG 52X32X52 CDRW beige (OEM)	17" ATX P4 300W Tower case with 2x USB @ Front	-
CD/DVD	LG CDRW 52X32X52	LG G SA-4082B DVD-RW + R DVD burner	LG 52X CD-RW / 16X DVD		52x32x52 CDRW	CD RW 48X4eX24 DVD ROM
Mouse	Optical 3 wheel	PS/2 wheel mouse	Internet 2 button Optical PS2 wheel mouse	SoneXPC 2 button PS/2 Wheel mouse	PS2 Wheel Mouse	Ball-bearing 3 button mouse PS/2
Keyboard	ADPEN windows KB	104 Key PS/2	Windows compliant 107keys PS2 keyboard	SoneXPC PS/2 107 KB	PS2 Windows Keyboard	multimedia 110 key PS/2
Software	-	-	-	-	-	XP home edition
Warranty	1 Year	3 year labor 1 year part	3 year labor 1 year part	3 year labor 1 year part	3 year labor 1 year part	1 year labor 1 year part
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Component	CSP Computer (p 21)	Elitech Computer (p 25)	eGloboInline	Discount Mac (p 23)	Eteon (p.12)	a-Linx (p.13)
CPU	Athlon XP 2700+	AMD Athlon XP2600+ Barton (RETAIL BOX)	AMD Athlon XP 2600+ 512K	1.2GHZ w/P4 B	Intel Celeron 2.4GHZ 128K Cache	Intel P4 2.4GHz 1M
Motherboard	ASUS A7V8X-X Socket A MB	ASROCK K7S41GX All-in-One Motherboard	ASUS A7V8X-X/A NFORCE2		ECS L7VMM3 2400+ Motherboard	ASUS P4V8X X_BxUSB2.0_Motherboard
Ram	512MB DDR333 RAM	512MB PC3200 DDR RAM	Saluton PC3200 256MB	256MB RAM DDR333 SDRAM	256MB PC2700 333Mhz DDR	256MB PC3200_DDR400 (Infineon)
Lan	10/100 Fast Ethernet Card	Integrated 10/100 net USB2.0	Integrated on board	Integrated 10/100	Integrated on board	10/100 Network card (D/B)
Video Card	GeForce4 MX440 64MB AGP	Integrated graphic display	Sapphire radeon 9200SE 12	Integrated video	Integrated on board	ATI Radeon 9200SE 128MB_DDR Video Card
Monitor	BenQ 17" 27mm 1280X1024	AOC 7F 17" .26 mm flat screen	BenQ P776 17" Flat 1280X1024	Integrated 17"	Acer AC713B 17" CRT Monitor Black	LG 17" 700S .27mm 1280X1024
Hard Drive	ATA133 80GB 7200RPM HDD	120GB 7200RPM HDD	Samsung 40GB 2MB 7200RPM	40GB Ultra ATA Drive	Samsung 80GB HDD 7200RPM Sata UDMA/100 2MB Buffer	WD 80GB-8M 7200rpm
Sound Card	Integrated sound card	Integrated 3D audio	Integrated on board		Integrated On board	AD1A01980 SoundMax 3D Sound(D/B)
Speakers	160W Stereo Speaker	Labtec power speaker	Aspen MS-801 pro 160W			3D Speakers with Subwoofer
Printer Scanner Case	18" 300W ATX Case w/Front USB	Acom 17"Tower Case w/ 300 P/S	eGlobal CSX-1270KL 18IN A		17" 660SEL ATX 350W	18" P4 300W & 2XUSB Front Tower Case
CD/DVD	LG 52x24x52 CDRW + 16X DVD	16X DVD ROM 8X DVD +/- RW	Benq DW1610 DVD +-RW 16X4X	Integrated CD/DVD	LG 52X CD-ROM 128K	LG 52X32X52 CD-RW
Mouse	Wheel Mouse	3 Buttons special wheel mouse PS/2	Logitech optical PS/2		Kay star Net Mouse 3D	Microsoft Optical Wheel Mouse
Keyboard	Internet Keyboard	107 Keys keyboard PS/2	Generic windows PS/2		Slim Illuminated KB	Microsoft Multimedia Keyboard
Software	-	-				
Warranty	1y labor 1 year part	3 year labor 1 year part	3 year labor 1 year part		3 year labor 1 year part	1 year
Price	$774.00	$788.00	$778.31	$1048.00	$768.00	$717.00
URL	www.cspcomputer.bc.ca	www.elitechcomputers.com	www.eglobalnline.com	www.dmac.bc.ca	www.iteaoncomputers.com	www.alinx.ca
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Technologies

Web Application Hosting
Don't want to run your own server? Leave your web applications in Neo Code's skilled hands. Our on-site programmers and server administrators can ensure that your applications are secure and reliable.

FileMaker Hosting
Our FileMaker Pro hosting plans give you value and reliability. We manage our server loads to enhance stability and performance, giving faster access and minimizing downtime. Our programmer team can also step in to help you optimize your database, integrate FileMaker with other applications, or just take FileMaker beyond where you ever thought it could go.

Databases:
- Filemaker Pro
- **mySQL**
- MS SQL
- PostgreSQL

Languages:
- **PHP**
- Lasso
- ASP
- XML
- JavaScript

Case Study- Fine Arts Engraving Inc.

The Challenge:
Fine Arts Engraving needed a system that would let them take orders and process payment for business cards and stationery for new IBM Global Services employees around the world. This system needed to be able to communicate with IBM's global accounting systems, be usable by all employees, regardless of their skills, and had to be up and running within a month.

The Solution:
Neo Code's talented and experienced programmers worked with Fine Arts Engraving to understand all the complexities of their ordering process, and develop a web-based solution within 14 days. Neo Code's team worked around the clock to create a custom application that would communicate via EDI with IBM's systems.

The Result:
Fine Arts Engraving was able to deliver business cards and stationery to 20,000 IBM employees around the world. The speed of delivery and the quality of the products won Fine Arts Engraving an ongoing relationship with this high-profile customer. In response, Fine Arts Engraving asked Neo Code to expand the solution to accommodate ordering for over 140,000 General Electric employees around the world.

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